

ABSTRACT

This invention relates to a process for the purification of phenols in a feedstock containing phenols and neutral oils and/or tar bases. The process includes liquid-liquid extraction of feedstock using a solvent and a counter-solvent, and separating the resulting solvent and counter-solvent layers. Phenols are then recovered from the separated solvent layer, and counter-solvent is recovered from the counter-solvent layer. The process also includes at least one of the following additions steps i) subjecting the separated solvent layer to distillation at atmospheric pressure; ii) subjecting the separated solvent layer to distillation, recovering an organic phase from the overheads product of the distillation step and recycling it to the liquid-liquid extraction step; and iii) recovering solvent from the counter-solvent layer.